

SDLA Children's Book Award Nominees in the Classroom

The following ideas for using Prairie Pasque and Prairie Bud Award nominated titles in the classroom were created by Mary Norton of Bound to Stay Bound Books (BTSB). Order information for these books may be found at www.btsb.com.

2007 PRAIRIE PASQUE AWARD NOMINEES

Avi. **NEVER MIND: A TWIN NOVEL**. Twelve-year-old twins Meg and Edward have nothing in common, so they are as shocked as everyone else when Meg's hopes for popularity and Edward's mischievous schemes collide in a showdown.

- Read the first 10 pages of the book aloud. Ask the students to discuss what they think a high-achievers club might be like. Ask the students to predict if Meg will get into the high-achievers club.
- This fast-paced novel told in the alternating voice of twins, Meg and Edward, will entertain the pre-teen crowd. The story is extremely convoluted. Read the dust jacket blurb and then introduce students to the book by choosing 5 children to read chapter 14 (page 82) aloud. You will need to make 5 copies of this chapter. The 5 voices will be Meg, and a narrator for her thoughts, Edward and a narrator for his thoughts, and Mother. The students will have to watch for quotation marks very carefully to know who should be reading. If you can have a practice session first it would be great as it will help with proper voice expression. If you have extra copies of the chapter so that all the students can follow along as the chapter is read it will help students see the importance of punctuation.

Clements, Andrew. **THE LAST HOLIDAY CONCERT**. When his music teacher puts him in charge of the holiday concert, popular sixth grader Hart Evans must use all of his leadership skills to unite the other students.

- In this book the students end up planning their own holiday concert. Most students have participated in some sort of holiday concert, recital, etc. Divide the students into groups and have each group plan a holiday program. Have students write down their ideas for name of the concert, decorations, songs, acts, etc. Have each group share their ideas with the entire class. It will be interesting to see what the students choose to include in their programs. Will the programs be politically correct? I wonder?
- If the entire book is used with a class have the class decide if the holiday concert is the main theme of the book or is it really about cooperation?

Related titles:

Clements, Andrew **LUNCH MONEY**. Twelve-year-old Greg is surprised to find himself teaming up with his rival, Maura, to create a series of comic books to sell.

Clements, Andrew **REPORT CARD**. When fifth-grader Nora Rowley comes up with a plan to prove that grades are not important, things begin to get out of control.

De Guzman, Michael. **BEEKMAN'S BIG DEAL**. Tired of the frequent moves that he and his father must make, twelve-year-old Beekman begins to make connections with neighbors and classmates after settling in a small, unusual New York City neighborhood.

- Although there are no pictures in this book the author's descriptive writing leaves the reader with great mental imagery. The colorful characters who live in Nutting Court conjure up interesting images to say the least. Read chapter 5 and 6 to the class. Have the students illustrate these chapters for the author.

Related title:

De Guzman, Michael. **MELONHEAD**. Tired of living with his non-caring divorced parents, Sidney, a twelve-year-old boy with an unusually large head, takes a bus trip across the United States which becomes a journey of self-discovery.

Gutman, Dan. **GET RICH QUICK CLUB**. Summer vacation in their small Maine town doesn't look too promising until eleven-year old Gina and four of her friends make a pact to become millionaires before school starts in September.

- You will notice at the bottom of many of the pages in this book there are notes. This is the American - English translation of an Australian - English sentence from the above text. Write some of these Australian sentences on the board, overhead, or whatever it takes to project these sentences so all students can see them. Have the students discuss what the sentence might mean. After the discussion translate the sentences. If the book is being read in its entirety to a class you might want to have the class make an American / Australian Glossary for this book as it is being read.
- In this book five kids are determined to make a million dollars by the end of the summer. Read the dust jacket blurb to the class and then discuss and speculate on what might happen. Will the kids make their million?

Grandits, John. **TECHNICALLY, IT'S NOT MY FAULT.** An eleven-year-old boy named Robert voices typical – and not so typical – middle grade concerns in this unique, memorable collection of hilarious poems, including musings over pizza, homework, thank-you notes, and an annoying older sister.

- Read and show a variety of these concrete poems to students before asking them to create some of their own. For added inspiration, have them examine the related titles below.

Related Titles:

Janeczko, Paul. **A POKE IN THE I.** A fine collection of concrete poems illustrated by Chris Raschka.

Lewis, J. Patrick. **DOODLE DANDIES: POEMS THAT TAKE SHAPE.** Each poem appears on the page in the shape of the subject so that the poem look likes what it is about.

Hahn, Mary Downing. **THE OLD WILLIS PLACE: A GHOST STORY.** Twelve-year-old Diana befriends the daughter of the new caretaker, setting in motion events that lead to the release of the spirit of an evil, crazy woman who once ruled the old Willis place.

- Read the first chapter aloud. This should stimulate a lot of questions – questions without answers. List the questions. Will the students be able to predict a main theme or idea? Probably not yet; however, they will want their questions answered and the only way for this to happen is to read the book.
- Read chapter 2 aloud. Have the students ask more questions. Have the students try to answer some of the questions. Have the students ask questions about Diana and Georgie and then draw inferences about these two characters.
- If the book is being read aloud to a class the students should visualize the setting for this story. Have the students draw an illustration for the book. This lesson would work especially well in the fall when you want something spooky and creepy and don't want it to be a Halloween story.

Related titles:

Hahn, Mary Downing. **DOLL IN THE GARDEN: A GHOST STORY.** After Ashley and Kristi find an antique doll buried in old Miss Cooper's garden, they discover that they can enter a ghostly turn-of-the century world by going through a hole in the hedge.

Hahn, Mary Downing. **TIME FOR ANDREW: A GHOST STORY.** When he goes to spend the summer with his great-aunt in the family's old house, eleven-year-old Drew is drawn eighty years into the past to trade places with his great-great-uncle who is dying of diphtheria.

Hale, Marian. **TRUTH ABOUT SPARROWS.** When twelve-year-old Sadie's family leaves drought-stricken Missouri for Texas in 1933, she learns that she must try to make a new home and new friends.

- In this book families are losing their homes because they can't make the mortgage payments. When children read about the price of items in this time period it sounds like a good deal. They will have questions about what these costs mean in today's prices. Here are some actual prices from a Sears, Roebuck and Co. Catalog from the winter and fall of 1937 – 1938. Boy's heavy quality slacks - \$1.19 / Boy's copper riveted heavy denim pants – 69 cents / Boy's Overalls – 87cents / Boy's shoes \$1.00 – \$1.89 per pair / Girl's skirt and blouse \$1.70 / School dress \$1.00 / Girls shoes \$1.00 – \$1.79 per pair. Sadie buys candy and other gifts for Christmas. Here are some candy prices from the Sears Catalog: 5 lbs. hard candy \$1.59 / Stick candy 50 sticks for 42cents/ 24 - 5cent Hershey bars (3lbs 10 oz.) for 79cents / 2 ½ lbs. Hershey kisses for 79cents. This information could make for some interesting math problems. How much does a Hershey bar weigh today? To convert prices from 1933 or 1937 to today's prices you will find a calculation table at this web site: www.minneapolisfed.org/Research/data/us/calc/ I found this by doing Google Search under Consumer Price Index. I looked at several sites, but like this table best.

- Sadie buys Christmas presents for her family and friends. Sadie earns wages each morning when she works. Convert these wages and prices into today's prices and earnings.
- **Note:** In chapter 24 Sadie's mama has her baby while they are out picking pecans. It is up to Sadie and her friend, Dollie to help deliver the baby. This chapter is written with discretion and sensitivity, but if you are reading this book aloud you may want to be aware of what's coming.

Related title:

Hale, Marian. **DARK WATER RISING**. While salvaging and rebuilding in the aftermath of the Galveston flood of 1900, sixteen-year-old Seth proves himself in a way that his previous efforts never could, but he still must face his father man-to-man.

Haseley, Dennis. **AMAZING THINKING MACHINE**. During the Great Depression, while their father is away looking for work, eight-year-old Patrick and thirteen-year-old Roy create a machine to help their mother make ends meet, even as she is helping tramps.

Hesse, Karen. **CATS IN KRASINSKI SQUARE**. Two Jewish sisters devise a plan to thwart an attempt by the Gestapo to intercept food bound for starving people behind the dark Wall.

- This story is deceptive. On the surface it looks simple, yet the concepts are difficult. The story is based on a true event. The treatment of the Jewish people during World War II is nothing but painful. However, when children outfox adults it certainly pleases all of us, especially children. Read this story to the sentence, "And I know what we must do." (If the pages were numbered with page 1 beginning with the first sentence of the story this would be page 15.) Stop here. Have the students predict what might be about to happen. Do they have any ideas of what Mira might do? After the discussion begins to lag read the rest of the story. There are author notes at the end of the story. Share some of these with the class.

Related titles:

Warren, Andrea. **SURVIVING HITLER: A BOY IN THE NAZI DEATH CAMPS**. Explores the experiences of a twelve-year-old Jewish boy growing up during the Holocaust in Poland.

Adler, David A. **HERO AND THE HOLOCAUST: THE STORY OF JANUEZ KORCZAK AND HIS CHILDREN**. A biography of the doctor, author, and founder of orphanages who lost his life trying to protect orphans from the Nazis.

Hodges, Margaret. **MERLIN AND THE MAKING OF THE KING**. A retelling of three Arthurian legends, "The Sword in the Stone," "Excalibur" and "The Lady of the Lake."

- This book contains 3 Arthurian legends. Merlin the magician watches over Arthur. The last tale, *The Lady of the Lake*, leaves the reader wondering what happens to Merlin. No one knows. Read this tale to the class. Have the students predict what might have happened to Merlin. You could have the students write a story, or you might want the students to tell a story. They should stay within the context of the tale, but there are no wrong answers.

Related titles:

Gilman, Laura Anne. **CAMELOT SPELL**. Three teenagers living in Camelot are forced to undertake a dangerous mission when King Arthur's court falls under a mysterious enchantment on the eve of the quest for the Holy Grail.

Kerven, Rosalind. **KING ARTHUR**. A retelling of the boy fated to be the "Once and Future King," covering his glorious reign and his tragic, yet triumphant, passing.

Janeczko, Paul B. **TOP SECRET: A HANDBOOK OF CODES, CIPHERS, AND SECRET WRITING**. A guide to making and breaking codes, mastering cipher systems, and experimenting with secret writing.

- Project the table of contents so the students can see how the author organized this book. The book begins with an introduction and continues to the conclusion. Along the way there are chapters on how to create codes and how to break codes. A walk through the table of contents will send this book flying off the shelves.
- If you only have a short amount of time to introduce this book read the introduction and the first page of the first chapter to the class. This will take you to HOBOSIGNS. This is an activity. Project these two pages and do this as a group activity with the class.
- This book has a wealth of lessons. Each chapter tells about a different type of code. Most of these codes could be used for a lesson.

Related title:

Adams, Simon. **CODE BREAKERS: FROM HIEROGLYPHS TO HACKERS**. Looks at code breaking from ancient times to the present age of quantum science. Includes information about related Internet web sites.

Kehret, Peg **ABDUCTION!** Thirteen-year-old Bonnie has a feeling of foreboding on the day that her six-year-old brother, Matt, and their dog, Pookie, are abducted, and she becomes involved in a search effort.

- The author concludes almost every chapter with a paragraph that is a cliffhanger. The reader absolutely can't put the book down. The reader has to turn the page to the next chapter. Copy the last paragraph from each of the first 10 chapters. In some cases you will need to copy the paragraph and last sentence underneath the paragraph. Divide the class into groups and give each group one of the paragraphs. Have each group draw inferences or predictions from their paragraph. After the groups have had time to discuss their ideas within their group have them share these inferences with the class. Start with group one and see if any type of logical sequence follows. The students will also have a lot of questions as they only have a little information. If you want to give the students a little more information before they do this activity you might read the dust jacket blurb aloud. The students will all want to read this book after this introduction.

Related titles:

Kehret, Peg. **DON'T TELL ANYONE**. Twelve-year-old Megan does not realize that feeding a group of feral cats will involve her as witness to an accident and in the dangerous plan of an unstable criminal.

Roberts, Willo Davis. **HOSTAGE**. When eleven-year-old Kaci interrupts burglars in the process of robbing her house, she and her nosy elderly neighbor Mrs. Banducci are kidnapped and held hostage by the desperate and ruthless criminals.

Nolan, Lucy. **DOWN GIRL AND SIT: SMARTER THAN SQUIRRELS**. Recounts the adventures of dogs who think their names are Down Girl and Sit, as they try to keep the world safe from squirrels, the paper boy, and a creature named Here Kitty Kitty.

- For this lesson the students will be using a lot of reading strategies as they listen to the first chapter of the book. The students will be so involved they might not even notice that they are using these strategies. If the students do seem confused you will have to model the strategies verbally as you read. Read the first chapter aloud and then have the students guess, predict, or create an ending for this chapter. The students must stay within the context of the story for their ending, but use their imagination for what is not in the text. Depending on time the students may give you an oral or written ending, or draw an illustration for the ending. The book has an illustration for the conclusion of this chapter. Show the students the book illustration after this discussion. How many predicted this would be the conclusion?

Related titles:

Nolan, Lucy A. **ON THE ROAD**. A dog who thinks her name is Down Girl goes on a car ride to the beach, goes camping in the woods, and reluctantly pays a visit to the vet with her master, Ruff.

Van Draanen, Wendelin. **SECRET IDENTITY**. Fifth grader Nolan Byrd, tired of being called names by the class bully, has a secret identity – Shredderman!

- Nolan, a.k.a. Shredderman, takes a very novel approach to deal with the class bully. People will have varying opinions about this being the correct way to address the problem. Introduce this book with a discussion about bullying. Have any of the students been the victims of a bully? What did they do? How should students deal with a bully? Go over the school rules to make sure each student knows what to do if they are bullied at school. What should children do if they are not at school? If time permits have students make posters to display the rules about how to deal with a bully.

Related titles:

Van Draanen, Wendelin. **ATTACK OF THE TAGGER**. Someone is spray-painting graffiti in Cedar Valley and it is up to fifth-grader "Shredderman" Nolan Byrd to expose the vandal.

Van Draanen, Wendelin. **ENEMY SPY**. When Nolan witnesses a serious crime, he realizes he may not be able to hide behind his Shredderman identity this time.

Van Draanen, Wendelin. **MEET THE GECKO**. Nolan Byrd, alias Shredderman, sets out to help the young star of his favorite television show expose a slanderous reporter.

Van Leeuwen, Jean **CABIN ON TROUBLE CREEK**. In 1803 in Ohio, two young brothers are left to finish the log cabin and guard the land while their father goes back to Pennsylvania to fetch their mother and younger siblings.

- Introduce this book with a discussion. Ask the question: What do you need for basic survival? Of course you need three basic things: food and water, shelter, and clothes. Daniel, an almost twelve-year-old, and his younger brother, Will, are left on their own in the fall of 1803 in the unsettled woods of Ohio. They are supposed to be on their own for about 8 weeks, but the weeks turn into months. How will they get the things they need? Make a chart with the headings: food, shelter and clothes. Have the students list what they might find, make and use from the environment to survive in the wilderness. If this book is read aloud in a classroom setting make this chart before reading the story. Make another chart after reading the book. The two charts will be very different.

Related title:

Speare, Elizabeth George. **SIGN OF THE BEAVER**. Left alone to guard the family's wilderness home in 18th century Maine, a boy is hard-pressed to survive until local Indians teach him their skills.

Wise, William. **CHRISTOPHER MOUSE: THE TALE OF A SMALL TRAVELER**. After being sold to an unscrupulous pet store owner, a young mouse lives with several owners and has many adventures, before ending up with an appreciative family.

- Mrs. Crimmins breeds mice for income. Christopher Mouse knows when he is old enough he will leave his mother and will go to live somewhere else. Ask the students where a white mouse might go? Most students will have prior knowledge about white mice. After they have had a discussion it will be time for a group story. Have the students tell a tale about what adventures Christopher Mouse will have. Have one student begin the story with one sentence and then have the next student add a sentence until each student has had a chance to participate. This fictional adventure story could get quite interesting. If time permits have students tell several stories.
- The author's note at the beginning of the book would be a fun springboard for a lesson. Have the students pretend to be their pet and write a diary from their pet's point of view. They should make the diary look like something their pet might use. Make the size appropriate, etc.

Related titles:

Avi. **POPPY AND RYE**. When their home next to a brook is destroyed by beavers, a large family of golden mice is aided by Poppy the deer mouse and her grumpy porcupine friend.

Avi. **POPPY'S RETURN**. Poppy, with her son Junior, his skunk friend, and Uncle Ereth, responds to a summons to return to her ancestral home, Gray House, to save the mice there from destruction by a bulldozer.

2007 PRAIRIE BUD AWARD NOMINEES

Adler, David A. **BONES AND THE BIG YELLOW MYSTERY**. Young Detective Jeffrey Bones gathers clues when Mr. Green asks for his help finding the school bus he lost while shopping.

- In this book Mr. Green loses his bus. Now, a bus is a rather large item to lose. Children might have been with their own parents when they have forgotten where they parked in a large mall parking lot. To help students learn directions have the students decide which walls are north, south, west and east in the library. Mark each wall accordingly. Ask one student to leave the room. Hide an object, like a toy bus. Have the student come back in the room. Have the students help the child find the bus by telling him/her to go east, west, etc until the bus is found.

Related titles:

Adler, David A. **BONES AND THE CUPCAKE MYSTERY**. Detective Jeffrey Bones solves the school-lunch mystery of Not-Me Amy's missing cupcake.

Adler, David A. **BONES AND THE DINOSAUR MYSTERY**. Young Detective Jeffrey Bones investigates the disappearance of a plastic dinosaur.

Bailey, Linda. **STANLEY'S PARTY**. Stanley the dog has a party while his people are out for the evening.

- Children will not have trouble connecting with this book because everyone loves a party. Stanley's party is really something. Have kids plan a party for Stanley. You can do this before you read the book or after. Divide the kids in groups. Each group should then create a dog-themed party. Have them plan invitations, decorations, games, refreshments and favors. If time is short each group could plan one aspect of the party. Kids will love this book.

Related title:

Bailey, Linda. **STANLEY'S WILD RIDE**. Stanley the dog and his friends escape from their yards and houses and find a world bigger than they ever imagined.

Brown, Don. **ODD BOY OUT: YOUNG ALBERT EINSTEIN**. An introduction to the work and early life of the twentieth-century physicist whose theory of relativity revolutionized scientific thinking.

- Discuss what the children already know about Albert Einstein. They might not know anything, or they might know a lot. Throw it out there and see. Most likely they won't know much about his childhood.
- Read the book to the class. How many students would have liked Albert as a classmate? What kind of friend would he have been? Who knows? What do they think his sister thought of him?
- Fun activity: Albert made a house of cards 14 stories high. This makes the reader want to try his hand at making a house of cards. Bring a number of decks to school and see if anyone can make a higher house. Who can make the highest house? This should be an activity that is fairly quiet, entertaining and also educational. Go for it.

Related titles:

Barasch, Lynne. **ASK ALBERT EINSTEIN**. Inspired by actual events, the story of a seven-year-old girl who wrote to Albert Einstein to help her older sister pass her math class.

Lakin, Patricia. **ALBERT EINSTEIN: GENIUS OF THE TWENTIETH CENTURY**. A biography of physicist Albert Einstein.

Buehner, Caralyn. **SUPERDOG: THE HEART OF A HERO**. Tired of being overlooked because he is so small, a big-hearted dog named Dexter transforms himself into a superhero.

- In this story Dexter wants to be a hero. What does the word hero mean? The Random House College Dictionary has 6 meanings for the word. 1. a man admired for his brave deeds. 2. a man who has heroic qualities and is a model or ideal. 3. hero sandwich. 4. a small loaf of Italian bread. 5. the principal male character in a story or play. 6. a warrior-chieftain of special strength, courage, or ability in the Homeric period. (I shortened the definitions to make them simple) Have these definitions on 6 separate cards. After reading the story ask the students which definition best fits Dexter?
- The illustrator has hidden cats, rabbits and Tyrannosaurus Rexes throughout his art in this book. This should keep the kids looking at the pictures and the circulation high on this title.

Related titles:

Bjorkman, Steve. **SUPERSNOOTS!** Hamlet the piglet joins Snoutbuster and Kernel Hog in a flying confrontation with two burglars on Farmer Frank's farm.

Cazet, Denys. **MINNIE AND MOO AND THE MUSK OF ZORRO**. Cows Minnie and Moo masquerade as the hero Zorro in order to protect the barnyard, but the results are not quite what they intended.

Connor, Leslie. **MISS BRIDIE CHOSE A SHOVEL**. Miss Bridie emigrates to America in 1856 and chooses to bring a shovel, which proves to be a useful tool throughout her life.

- Before reading ask this question: What tool is the most useful? Why? (You might want to suggest that they choose a tool that does not use electricity or batteries.) Another question you might want to ask: If you were moving far away and could only take a few belongings what special item would you choose to take?
- What do you use a shovel for? Have the children list as many answers to this question as they can. After reading the book have children list the many ways Miss Bridie used her shovel.

Related title:

Hillenbrand, Jane **WHAT A TREASURE**. Mole digs with his new shovel, finding useful things for the other animals and a new friend for himself.

Haas, Jessie. **BIRTHDAY PONY**. Grandma Aggie tries to help her granddaughter Jane and the independent pony Popcorn, who were born on the same day, become riding partners.

- Read the first chapter of this book and have the students generate questions about ponies. For example: Is a pony a baby horse or a small horse? How do you train a pony? What do you feed a pony? After you have a list of questions see if any of the children know the answers. If they don't know the answers and you don't either you will find some of the answers on this web site:
www.mda.state.mi.us/kids/countyfair/animals/ponies/index.html.

Related title:

Haas, Jessie. **JIGSAW PONY**. Twins Kiera and Fran have never agreed on anything but when their dream comes true and their father surprises them with a pony, they must learn to work together to care for their new pet.

Hall, Bruce Edward. **HENRY AND THE KITE DRAGON**. In New York City in the 1920s, the children from Chinatown go after the children from Little Italy for throwing rocks at the kites Grandfather Chin makes.

- This book is about children from two different cultures: Chinese and Italian. If you have children from both of these cultures in the class you might ask them about their customs, ethnic recipes, etc. However, if the children were born and raised in America and their parents have been here for several generations they might not know. If you have **World Book Online** this would be a good time to introduce this to your students. This way you can introduce China and Italy to the students. If you have books on both of these countries you could display them. The more connections you can make with these countries the better understanding the children will have of the story.
- Art activity: The book listed below has directions for making a kite.

Related titles:

Pilegard, Virginia Walton. **WARLORD'S KITES**. When a hostile army attacks the warlord's palace in ancient China, Chuan and his friend, Jing Jing, find an ingenious way to scare them off using simple kites. Includes instructions for making a kite from a paper bag.

Yolen, Jane. **EMPEROR AND THE KITE**. When the emperor is imprisoned in a tower, his daughter, whom he has always ignored, uses her kite to save him.

Jenkins, Steve. **ACTUAL SIZE**. Discusses and gives examples of the size and weight of various animals and parts of animals.

- The last four pages of the book have more information about each of the animals. Just for this lesson copy these pages and put each animal and their information on a card. Divide the class into pairs and have each pair of children read a card. Then have each pair of children tell the class what they learned about their animal. Sometimes kids never read the "small print" in a book. After they look at the pictures they are done.

Related titles:

Jenkins, Steve **BIG & LITTLE**. Illustrates the concept of size by comparing different animals, from the smallest visible animals to the largest.

Jenkins, Steve **BIGGEST, STRONGEST, FASTEST**. Describes some of the biggest, smallest, fastest, slowest, strongest and longest animals in the world.

Look, Lenore. **RUBY LU, BRAVE AND TRUE**. "Almost-eight-year-old" Ruby Lu spends time with her baby brother, goes to Chinese school, performs magic tricks and has adventures.

- This book has a great glossary of words, terms and places. This glossary is titled, RUBY'S FANTASTIC GLOSSARY AND PRONUNCIATION GUIDE and is found on page 101. Copy these pages for an assignment. Give these pages to the students or project the pages on a scanner or overhead so all students can see this glossary. Have the students write a short story using as many of these words as possible. They will then be looking for these words as they read or listen to the book.

- Art Lesson: Flip Pictures. This book has a moving flip picture on the bottom corner. Just fan the bottom corners and you will see the magic hat do some tricks. Have the students make a flip picture. Each student will need a plain 3x5 note card with a 3x5 piece of paper taped across the top to the note card. It will be kind of like a one page tablet. It should be taped on the 3-inch side. Have the students draw a simple picture on the card. A stick figure of a person will work just fine. Next tell the students to think in opposites and draw a similar picture on the paper on top of the card. If the arms are up on the card they should be down on the paper. The legs should be in another position, also. After the pictures are finished take a pencil and roll up the top page. Then take the pencil and quickly roll the top paper up and down. It will look like the person is moving his arms and legs. Students will quickly see that they may make more elaborate pictures using this technique.

Related title:

Look, Lenore **RUBY LU, EMPRESS OF EVERYTHING**. Ruby Lu finds life challenging as she adjusts to many changes including those within her family, friendships and school.

McGhee, Alison. **MRS. WATSON WANTS YOUR TEETH**. A first grader is frightened on her first day of school after hearing a rumor that her teacher is a 300-year-old alien with a purple tongue who steals baby teeth from her students.

- This book is a perfect read aloud for the first day of school. Before reading the story ask first graders to tell you what they liked best about kindergarten. Write these answers down. Have them tell you what they didn't like. Write these answers down. Have 2nd grade students write sentences about what they think they should tell 1st graders about school. After they finish their sentences read this story to them.

Related title:

De Groat, Diane. **BRAND-NEW PENCILS, BRAND-NEW BOOKS**. Gilbert's excitement over starting first grade turns to worry that the teacher will be mean, the work too hard, and his classmates too unfriendly, but throughout the day there are pleasant surprises.

Naliboff, Jane. **ONLY ONE CLUB**. Jennifer discovers that she is the only one in Mrs. Matthew's class who is Jewish, but soon learns that each of her classmates is the "only one" at something.

- Read this story to students and challenge students to come up with special traits that would make them eligible for the "only one" club.

Nevius, Carol. **KARATE HOUR**. Rhyming text portrays the exuberance of an hour of karate class. Includes nonfiction information

- In the text there are words that the reader might think are there for sound effects, but they are really part of the karate vocabulary. If you read the Author's Note you will learn the karate vocabulary. List these words on the board: karate, gi, sensei, katas, dojo, shodan, Hai-ya, Ki-ai. Read the Author's Note aloud to the class. The children will be able to pick up the definitions from the text. Pause to fill in the definitions for the vocabulary words as you read. Older students could be given a copy of the Author's Note and write the definitions on their own.

Related title:

Leary, Mary **KARATE GIRL**. Hoping to protect her younger brother from school bullies, a girl begins taking karate classes.

Orloff, Karen Kaufman. **I WANNA IGUANA**. Alex and his mother write notes back and forth in which Alex tries to persuade her to let him have a baby iguana for a pet.

- Read the book to the class and use the book as a pattern for this activity. Divide the class into four teams. While two teams are performing, the other two teams will be the audience. One team will decide on a pet that they would like to have. They will write a letter to the opposite team telling them what pet they would like and why. They should do this on a large sheet of paper in front of the class. The second team will reply back

why they should not have this creature for a pet. This back and forth discussion will work as a writing assignment and simple debate. Who will win the discussion? After these two teams finish, the other two teams can give it a go with another animal.

Related title:

Miller, Jake **GREEN IGUANA**. Describes the life cycle and habits of the green iguana.

Salley, Coleen. **WHY EPOSSUMONDAS HAS NO HAIR ON HIS TAIL**. Epossumondas' mother tells him a story about how his great-great-grandfather became the first possum to have a hairless tail.

- Why don't possums have hair on their tails? Ask the students what they think? Then read the story. Read **HOW THE ELEPHANT GOT HIS TRUNK** by Rudyard
- Kipling and compare and contrast this story. Pick out the story elements in both tales. Both stories have language that makes them fun to listen to.
- Art Activity: Depending on the version you have of **HOW THE ELEPHANT GOT HIS TRUNK** you might have illustrations of the elephant where Kipling has written that he thinks the Elephant would look much better if he was colored, etc. If you have this illustration, copy it for the students and let them help Kipling out by coloring the picture.

Related titles:

Salley, Coleen. **EPOSSUMONDAS**. A retelling of a classic tale in which a well-intentioned young possum continually takes his mother's instructions much too literally.

Franco, Betsy. **WHY THE FROG HAS BIG EYES**. A fable explaining how a staring contest left frogs with large eyes.

Kipling, Rudyard. **COLLECTION OF RUDYARD KIPLING'S JUST SO STORIES**. Eight Kipling tales with artistic interpretations from illustrators including Peter Sis and Satoshi Kitamura.

Sierra, Judy. **WHAT TIME IS IT, MR. CROCODILE?** Mr. Crocodile's plans to catch and eat some pesky monkeys do not work out and he becomes friends with them instead.

- In this story Mr. Crocodile organizes his day by making an hourly schedule. Organization is something that needs to be learned. Help students make a daily schedule. It will have variations for the time before and after school. I wonder how much time they will allow for television and video games. Will they include time for reading? It might be very interesting.

Related titles:

Sierra, Judy. **COUNTING CROCODILES**. By using her ability to count, a clever monkey outwits the hungry crocodiles that stand between her and a banana tree on another island across the sea.